

APPENDIX 3.8.X.

**GUIDELINES ON SURVEILLANCE
FOR AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS**

Article 3.8.X.1.

Introduction

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Susceptible wild equid populations should be included in surveillance when these animals are intended for trade. In addition, surveillance of wild equid populations and feral equids (eg those released into the wild) should be done when located in “seasonally free” areas.

Rationale: it must be made explicit that surveillance must also be performed on susceptible populations located in such “seasonally free” areas.

Article 3.8.X.2.

General conditions and methods

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2. The AHS surveillance programme should:
 - a) in a country/*zone*, free or seasonally free, include an early warning system for reporting suspicious cases. Persons who have regular contact with equids, as well as diagnosticians, should report promptly any suspicion of AHS to the *Veterinary Authority*. An effective surveillance system will periodically identify suspicious cases that require follow up and investigation to confirm or exclude that the cause of the condition is AHS. *The rate at which such suspicious cases are likely to occur will differ between epidemiological situations and cannot therefore be predicted reliably.* All suspected cases of AHS should be investigated immediately and samples should be taken and submitted to an *approved laboratory*. This requires that sampling kits and other equipment are available for those responsible for surveillance;

General Comment – the statement “The rate at which such suspicious cases are likely to occur will differ between epidemiological situations and cannot therefore be predicted reliably” may argue against the concept of ‘seasonally free’

Article 3.8.X.3.

Surveillance strategies

The target population for surveillance aimed at identification of *disease* and/or *infection* should cover susceptible domestic equids within the country or *zone*. Active and passive surveillance for AHSV infection should be ongoing. Surveillance should be composed of random or targeted approaches using virological, serological and clinical methods appropriate for the infection status of the country or *zone*.

General comment: Since zebras and African donkeys may be reservoir hosts for AHSV, such animals should be included in certain surveillance activities, e.g. those programs designed to declare zones ‘free’ or ‘seasonally free’.

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